

## Raising children's learning and performance: a study in a large UK Primary school

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### Abstract :

Raising children's learning and performance and implementing effective strategies to improve standards represent continuous challenges for government policy makers, schools and teachers. Whilst school effectiveness and school improvement policies and strategies have endeavoured to do this through various strategies, the key to sustainable effective improvements in different contexts remains elusive. This study is complementary to school policy studies and provides a different way of raising children's learning and performance. The study also addresses a gap in the literature. The approach adopted was to focus on children through targeting various holistic interventions in the form of sound and movement programmes in order to remediate the underlying causes of under performance by children. The study also adopted a novel approach of combining the two interventions, referred to in this study as an integrated approach.

To date, most studies have focused on external conditions or on the enablers to providing effective learning experiences. In recent years, there have been new and innovative interventions used in private institutions using more holistic ways of improving children's learning and performance. This research builds on this approach and attempts to extend the ideas generated in the private institutions by investigating these approaches in a school context with the hope of furthering the knowledge in this field. In addition, the aim is to propose a holistic model for raising children's learning and performance which capitalises on the work of school effectiveness and school improvement research, to date, in their bid to raise children learning.

To achieve this objective a quasi-experimental, exploratory study which adopted quantitative methods of data collection was used in a school, with four parallel classes (in total 119 children) aged nine/ten years, using the following standardised tests: Suffolk Group Reading Test, the NFER Non- verbal (NFER Nelson) and TAPS-R (Gardner 1985) Digit Span Test to measure and gain an overall picture of any impact made by the interventions. The experimental study took place over a period of eight months. Two classes completed the individual interventions, whilst one completed both as an integrated approach and one class had no intervention.

Results showed that the movement interventions and the integrated intervention raised overall performance. However, the sound intervention raised only reading performance. The integrated intervention did not show increased results over and above the two individual interventions, leading to the conclusion that it did not generate a significant and marked impact. Based on the empirical findings and on the literature, a model of the Child Centric Learning Effectiveness Cycle (CCLEC) was proposed to help raise children's learning and performance in schools.

**Citation :** Dr Alweena Awan, Raising children's learning and performance: a study in a large UK Primary school, 2nd International Conference on Lifestyle Disease & Medicine, April 22-23, 2021 at Germany